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McCall, Samuel W. (Samuel Walker)

THE PHILIPPINE TARIFF BILL.

S P E E C H

OF

HON. SAMUEL W. McCALL
OF MASSACHUSETTS,

IN THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

January 12, 1906.

WASHINGTON.
1906.

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SPEECH
OF
HON. SAMUEL W. McCALL.

The House being in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and having under consideration the bill (H. R. 3) to amend an act entitled "An act temporarily to provide revenue for the Philippine Islands, and for other purposes," approved March 8, 1902—

Mr. McCALL said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The objections to the policy of free trade with the Philippine Islands could easily have been foreseen before those islands were annexed to the United States. The policy involved in this bill is no surprise to the country. It was ordained seven years ago, when the treaty of Paris was ratified, and unless we are to suppose that the American people should prove false to the fundamental principle of their political gospel, which was in existence before they were and which they had religiously observed until that time, it was inevitable that sooner or later we should have free trade with the Philippine Islands. I do not have any sympathy with those gentlemen who were the original advocates of annexation and who are now viewing with alarm the threatened destruction of American industries. I think they should manfully recognize that they are simply going to pay the price for having indulged in some beautiful rhetoric about the flag, how it should never be hauled down no matter for what purpose it had been run up, and also for the pleasure of standing upon the mount of prophecy and seeing dazzling visions of an illimitable trade destined never to exist. They are paying the penalty to-day for having contributed toward making the Philippine Islands American territory.

My friend from Pennsylvania [Mr. DALZELL], who is one of the most genuine orators I have ever listened to upon this floor, in a burst of piety and eloquence yesterday credited the providence of God with the responsibility or the glory for our possession of the Philippine Archipelago. This observation of my friend reminded me of a remark credited to Mr. Henry Labouchere concerning a celebrated British statesman. He did not find fault, Mr. Labouchere said, that that statesman should now and then be found with an ace up his sleeve, but he did object when he claimed that it was put there by Divine Providence. [Laughter.] Horace, in his Art of Poetry, has said that you should not introduce a deity upon the scene unless there were some very hard knot to untie, which it would require a deity to do, and it seems to me gentlemen who have defended our Philippine policy here have acted strictly within the rule

laid down by Horace. They have a hard knot to untie, and they have frequently introduced Providence into this debate. It is a convenient refuge to fly to when one is hard pressed for argument.

The policy of free trade was established, to my mind, when we annexed the Philippine Islands, and my action was determined for me by others in spite of my opposition when annexation was decreed, and I feel constrained to support free trade as a necessary result of annexation. It was ordained when we bought from Spain the bloodiest foreign war in which this Republic ever engaged. I say foreign war, because those people never owed us any allegiance whatever, and the war was purely one of conquest and subjugation. It was a war aptly characterized by the fine line cited by Mr. Mead:

Cursed is the war no poet sings.

Imagine, if you can, an American poet singing and the American schoolboy declaiming the most glorious exploit of that war, the capture of the Philippine chieftain by American soldiers in Philippine uniforms at the very moment when he was extending to them succor from impending starvation.

The bill before the House illustrates, to my mind, one of the inherent vices of our Philippine policy. Whom do we represent here to-day? The Secretary of War was in doubt whether he primarily represented the people of the Philippines or the people of this country. A great banker may at the same moment of time—because it has been done—represent an insurance company which buys and the banking firm which sells securities. [Laughter.] Another Napoleon of finance at the head of an insurance company may in his wisdom and benevolence disburse the trust funds in his hands for the conversion of the political heathen in the United States. [Laughter.]

But we are sitting under peculiar sanction. We are the trustees of the American people and can have no divided allegiance. We are bound strictly to the duty that we owe our people. It is hardly for us to indulge in self-congratulation over our benevolence. In the first place, it is a purely obtrusive benevolence. The Filipino people have not asked for it. We have forced it upon them at the cannon's mouth. In the next place, we are not a missionary society, but the chosen servants of the American people, and to my mind it appears hypocritical self-palaver and repugnant to all sound notions of official responsibility for us to congratulate ourselves, when we are using powers we hold in trust, on the benevolence we are showing the people of the Philippine Islands.

Who represents the people of those islands to-day? Suppose that they had the power that we have, and were making tax laws to-day for both themselves and for us. I am not saying what they might think best to give us in their benevolence, but some might think it well for them to have peculiar trade relations with the great group of nations which nature had given them as neighbors. Has that fact any consideration to-day? When one attempts to represent both sides in a trade, he is not apt adequately to represent either.

I believe that when the Philippine Islands became American territory they were entitled to that uniformity of duties prescribed by the Constitution, and it was their constitutional right

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